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Poems

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Poems

Cover Page Footnote

This article is from an earlier iteration of *Diálogo* which had the subtitle "A Bilingual Journal." The publication is now titled "Diálogo: An Interdisciplinary Studies Journal."

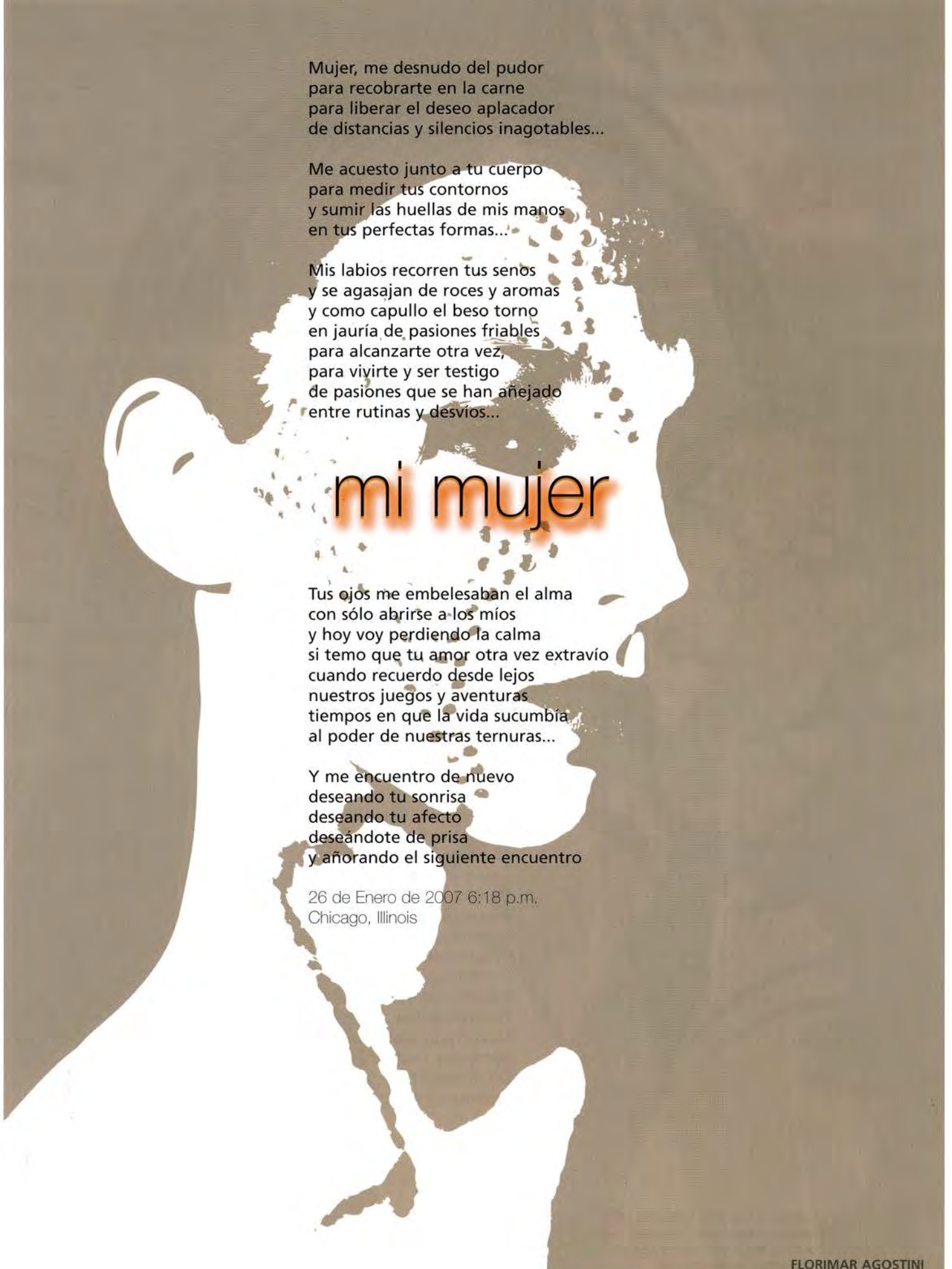
inventing you tonight . . .

Thoughts of your image,
your presence
and your warmth
invade my bed tonight
I feel the need to hold you close,
so close...
but you're not here.
I can sense you around me,
inside me
and on me.
I ache for your body next to mine,
Your sweaty hands caressing my thighs,
Your curly hair resting on my chest,
Your smell, your murmurs of lust
and the light that shines in your eyes.
Outside the wind keeps blowing,
the night keeps falling,
but inside
life has stopped
for just the exact moment,
that takes me
to invent you in my bed.

clamando mi verdad

Todo en ella clamaba mi nombre;
su ardiente cuerpo arremetido contra el mío,
sus punzantes pezones abriendo camino en mi piel,
sus manos sudorosas excavando mis entrañas,
y su lujuria delirante rasgando en pedazos mi miedo de amar.
Enardecida de amor,
se hacia resbalar
por los más recónditos escondites de mi piel.
Gritaba en silencio su amor por mí.
Bebía, sorbo a sorbo,
de mi pasión reprimida,
y al hacerlo, moría y renacía otra vez.
Todo en ella ansiaba tocar mi alma.
Inhalaba, lentamente, mi esencia,
mi espíritu fugaz, mi atemorizada apetencia de ella.
Oprimía con todas mis fuerzas, mis ansias refrenadas,
hasta arrodillarme ante tus pies,
desgarraba uno a uno, mis miedos, mis deseos ocultos,
mis principios lacerados.
Todo en ella abría paso a mí.
Daba aliento a mi enerte cuerpo,
caminaba mi sendero
y llegaba hasta mi verdad.
Abría sigilosamente la puerta doblemente asegurada
con hierros y candados,
Y entraba triunfalmente
con su séquito de sentimientos desbordados,
de lujuria callejera
y de ansias de amarme una vez mas.

MARITZA NAZARIO, a playwright, has extensive experience teaching, acting, directing and writing for theater. She has both a Bachelor's Degree as well as a Master's Degree in Drama/Theater. Some of her most memorable theatrical experiences are: the world premier of *El Público* by Lorca, *El Circulo de Tiza Caucaiano* by Brecht and *Assembly Line* by Mantegna & Williams. Maritza's performance credits also include radio and television, as well as voice overs for industrial films.
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Mujer, me desnudo del pudor
para recobrarte en la carne
para liberar el deseo aplacador
de distancias y silencios inagotables...

Me acuesto junto a tu cuerpo
para medir tus contornos
y sumir las huellas de mis manos
en tus perfectas formas...

Mis labios recorren tus senos
y se agasajan de roces y aromas
y como capullo el beso torno
en jauría de pasiones friables
para alcanzarte otra vez,
para vivirte y ser testigo
de pasiones que se han añejado
entre rutinas y desvíos...

mi mujer

Tus ojos me embelesaban el alma
con sólo abrirse a los míos
y hoy voy perdiendo la calma
si temo que tu amor otra vez extravió
cuando recuerdo desde lejos
nuestros juegos y aventuras
tiempos en que la vida sucumbía
al poder de nuestras ternuras...

Y me encuentro de nuevo
deseando tu sonrisa
deseando tu afecto
deseándote de prisa
y añorando el siguiente encuentro

26 de Enero de 2007 6:18 p.m.
Chicago, Illinois

FLORIMAR AGOSTINI



my body beautiful

I want to show you something marvelous
Something tremendous
Something delicious
I ask you not to be overzealous
However, some will be jealous
You see, some are envious yet would love to surrender
Many swear by it, regardless of gender
Rumor has it, even saints have been pleased
I want to show you...my body beautiful
• She's sensual, soft and supple
She's delicious
Some say even nutritious
Study her, desire her
My body beautiful, indulge in her...
My hips
My lips
My thighs
My eyes
Even my big beautiful behind
Admire her
Embrace her
Caress her
Delight in her
Please, do enjoy her
And when you can't wait any longer
What I have is not to ponder
Drink from her
Relish from her
Experience her...all of her
Now I must leave you craving with desire
Some day I will gratify your fire
Do dream of me; the pleasure and joyful pain
Promise to bring you to... time and time again

EVON BARRERA, born and raised in Chicago's Humboldt Park always knew she had a strong desire to express herself through writing and performing. Evon embraces her Afro-Taino roots and liberal sexuality which she passionately executes through the art of spoken word.

el cuerpo del delito

Mi cuerpo tan lleno de pecado
incitando a la desgracia
al instinto animal de los hombres.

Mi piel tan débil y sensible
a un roce inocente de otra mano
deseando a escondidas que la toquen
o la laman o la muerdan
o le hagan morir henchida de vida.

Hay que tapar la piel
no dejar que las piernas sientan
el murmullo del viento
soplando tibio entre ellas.

Hay que aplastar los senos
evitar que se balanceen libremente
que respiren sintiendo el ardor
de uno labios besando su inocencia.

Hay que flagelar la carne
hacerla sangrar hasta que olvide
que siente placer al ser tocada.

Mi cuerpo que no debo
ni siquiera yo tocar
aunque Dios me hizo así
con este cuerpo tan débil
tan pecador y tan necesitado
de otro cuerpo.

body of evidence

TRANSLATION

My body so full of sin
instigating the misfortune
and the animal instinct of men.

My skin so weak and sensitive
to an innocent brush by another hand
secretly wishing to be touched
or licked or bitten
or hoping to feel the miracle
of dying alive.

Skin must be covered
legs must not be allowed to feel
the whisper of the wind
blowing warmly between them.

Breasts must be flattened
they must not be allowed to swing freely
to sigh feeling the warmth
of lips kissing their innocence.

Flesh must be punished, flagellated
made to bleed until it forgets
it feels pleasure when it's touched.

My body that even I should not dare to touch
although God made me like this
with this body so weak, so sinful
and so much in need of another body.

JOHANNY VÁZQUEZ PAZ



piel morena

Tu piel morena bajo
mi blanca desnudez
es como tierra fecunda
en donde siembro mis semillas.

De mis nubes se desbordan
gotas de lluvia hacia tu huerto
y flores salvajes crecen
en tus poros inundados de mí.

Tu piel morena es mi tierra
es la patria a la cual he regresado
después de muchos años de ausencia
para quedarme hasta morir.

Mi piel blanca junto
a tu oscura desnudez
es mi alma amanecida en tu cuerpo
es tu corazón latiendo entre mis dedos
es un túyyo sin espacios vacíos entre medio.

piel morena

thanks for my curves

Thanks for my curves
from east to west
from north to south
tight around here
loose around there
mountainous on the top
dangerous on the bottom
let them move freely
feeling the banging of the drum

oye como va, mi ritmo,
bueno pa' gozar, mulato

moving unrestrained
like Tembandumba de la Quimbanba
breasts to one side
tip to the other
public eyes delighted
with the endless curve
of my buttocks
and my passion proud of being
a woman from head to toe.

TRANSLATION

Gracias por mis curvas
de este a oeste
de norte a sur
apretadas por aquí
seltas por allá
arriba montañosas
abajo peligrosas
dejarlas libres que se muevan
que sientan los golpes al cuero

oye como va, mi ritmo,
bueno pa' gozar, mulato

meneándome desenfrenada
como Tembandumba de la Quimbanba
los senos pa'un lado
la punta pa'l otro
los ojos públicos embelesados
con la curva interminable
de mis nalgas
y la pasión orgullosa
de ser mujer de pies a cabeza.

gracias por mis curvas

JOHANNY VÁZQUEZ PAZ was born and raised in Puerto Rico. She's the author of *Streetwise Poems/Poemas callejeros* published by Mayapple Press (2007), and co-edited the anthology *Between the Heart and the Land/ Entre el corazón y la tierra: Latina Poets in the Midwest* (MARCH/Abrazo Press, 2001). Her poems have been included in many journals and anthologies, including the compilation *Poetas sin tregua* of Puerto Rican poets from the 80's generation. She presently teaches Spanish at Harold Washington College in Chicago and is the emcee of the Guild Complex Bilingual Poetry Series *Palabra Pura*.
To contact: poetisa10@aol.com -- Blog TINTA DERRAMADA:
<http://johannyvazquezpaz.blogspot.com/>

I'm an island girl
I eat pan de bollo con matequilla
Me meso en la hamaca como una chiquilla

I'm an island girl
Janqueo con las chicas aya por la orilla
Les hago el amor en la marquesina
Me sustengo en platanos, papayas y chinas
Busco a las mujeres en todas esquinas

I'm an island girl
Me gustan las nenas reveldes y un poco agresivas
Me las llevo al cielo y nunca a escondidas
I prefer el coco, Kola Champagne y Medalla fria
Me pongo coqueta y te digo, "mami, van pa'ca, para que te rias"

I'm an island girl
Me gusta la salsa, Merengue y rumbon
Bailo con las jevas desde el corazón
Escucho el Coqui por que soy de alli
Me siento en la arena y alli me ofreci

I'm an island girl
Me pierdo en la plena con sentimiento y alegria
Me gozo en los bongos y me siento mia
Muevo las caderas sin verguenza y pena
Corro por el monte y me siento llena

Miro a las estrellas alli arriba en el cerro
Escucho a mi alma sin ansia y desespero
Me siento bien fuerte, como si fuera de acero

I'm an island girl
Me encuentro el Mango y alli yo me trepo
No hay ninguna duda que yo me respeto
Le canto a la caña, esa nunca engaña
Me monto el la llegua y llego a la cabaña

I'm an island girl y no te lo niego
Me tomo el Ron Caña y asta ya sin miedo
Me chupo el limon asi lo quiero
Me pongo amapolas cuando las espero

I'm an island girl
Me siento orgullosa
hago lo que quiero
Sere lo que soy asta que me muero

Escucho a mi vieja, ella si que enseña
Dedico esta bomba a las caribeñas

BOMBA!!!!

a bomba
for an island girl

a promise to a crone

In my golden years
I will be the matriarch in the family of a different persuasion
An old crone who lived like a dyke and loved like a dyke
Lived her life fully, openly out
And used closets only for their true intention

I will tell stories of women that I've loved
Of friendships that surpassed time
I will speak of all the lesbians who grounded me
Butches and studs who took me there and brought me back
Femmes, lipstick dykes in stilettos
Radical feminists and androgynous types
I will be the crone who loved them all

I will live frugal, not cheat
I will take road trips to the middle of nowhere
Drive a red convertible and let me nappy gray hair go wild and free
Embark in journeys never dared taking
Challenge the concept of limitations along the way

I will run barefoot in wet grass
Splash my wrinkly self in rivers and oceans
Liberated, oblivious and free

I will girl watch in dark sun glasses
Flirt with the waitress at the local greasy spoon
I will play with children
I will know the difference between living young and acting my age

I will be an unstoppable crone
Fear of nothing or no one
I will be crone who misbehaves
You know, la vieja even your abuela warned you about
Give them a little something to talk about
I will be appropriately inappropriate
I will watch raunchy lesbian videos
And masturbate myself to a joyful bliss
Any day of the week
In the middle of the living room

I will dance on tables
Drink my liquor straight up
Hide joints under my pillow
I will be the vieja on the block with the annoyingly loud stereo
Melodies of Mambo, Salsa, Merengue, Soukus, Reggae
Boleros, Boogaloes and Afrikan rumbas blasting on my radio
Dancing or foot tapping
I will let the music carry me

Let the drums stop time
Take me to a higher place
Let the rhythm move me

I am a woman fifty years in the making
In my next fifty years
I will live a life of no regrets
Live all of my choices without apologies
Follow my heart
Be gentle and forgiving of myself
Live every day as if it's my last

Re-define
Re-construct
Re-create
Clear my path
My life begins TODAY

MARTHA CARTAGENA is a native of Puerto Rico, migrated to Chicagoland area with family during childhood; a Spanglish child raised within borders. Describes her self as a "proud and out Lipstick Dyke with an insatiable passion for life, poetry, music, drumming and women." Determined to dismantle the silences thru Spoken Word, "poetry and writing have become my outlet, my tool for re-birth."

The Migrant Trail

FOR DEBBI AND ED, WHO SHOWED US THE WAY.

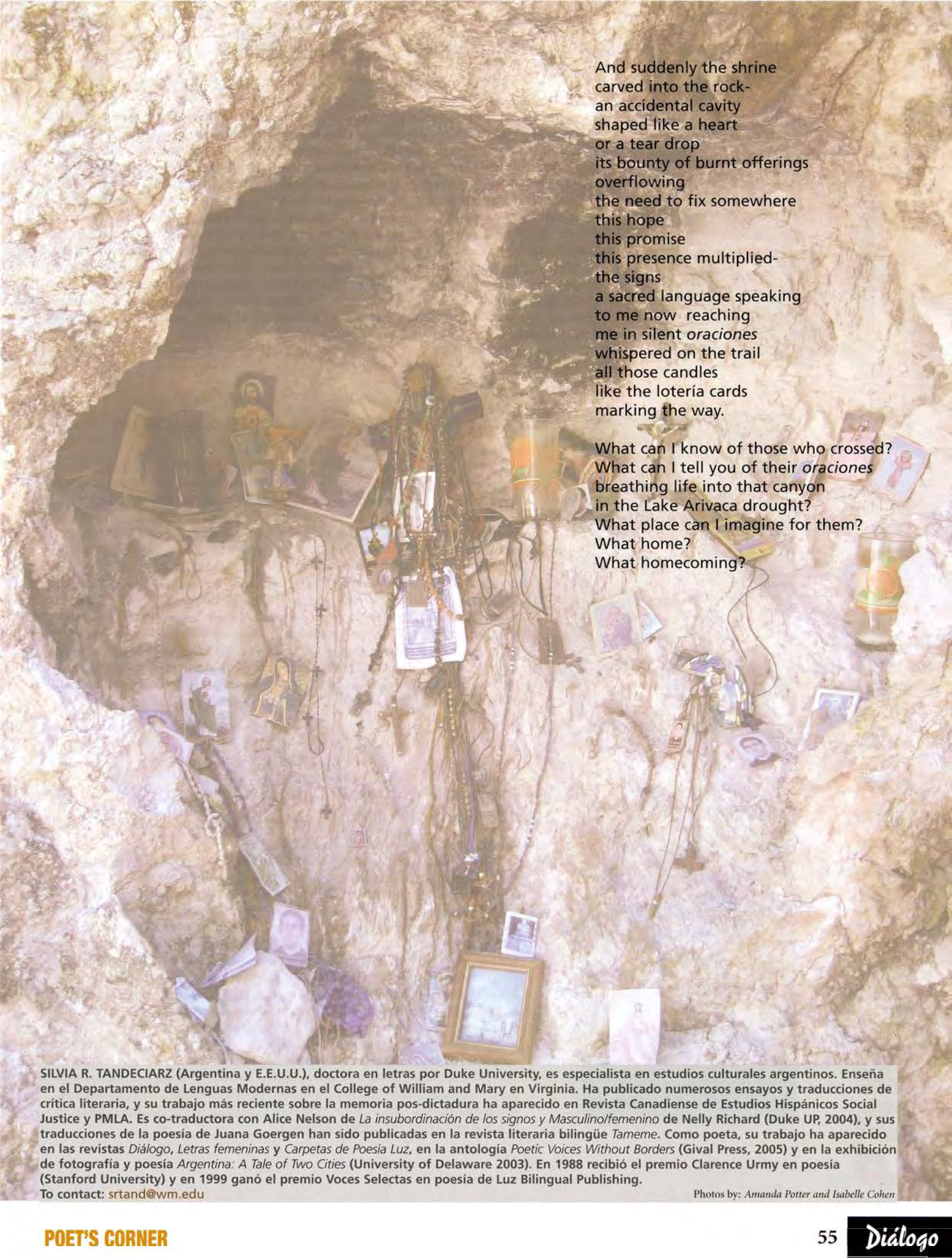
With refilled canteens
Sunscreen, scarves and hats
We set off behind our guides
Expert trackers
Who over time had mapped
The passing from the other side.

We'd been apprised of signs to look for,
remnants of those who'd crossed
with only what their frames could bear:
empty plastic vessels everywhere, the wrapper
of a candy bar, socks and t-shirts snared by
the branches of the ocotillo
a pair of shorts crowning the brush
of a crucifixion thorn, torn and
limp with longing.

And more. A diaper bag emblazoned with the Lion King.
A polyester bra, still pink, its sunken cups worn into the dirt.
And close by, cans of tuna, their throats slit
marking the hunger, its steady thud, like
the shoes, so many lost, never in pairs
found wanting
with their tongues dried up.

I remember most the ooohs and aaahs
when we stumbled across these signs of life:
there it was! A first shoe! Captured for posterity
by every camera, no flash-
And later, the shreds of yet another life:
a vaccination record with a name
dated just two months back.
A cross, a rosary, a prayer card
and the steady gaze of
Santo Toribio Romo,
Patron Saint of migrants
looking up.

VAN MAS DE 5000
¿CUANTOS MAS?



And suddenly the shrine
 carved into the rock-
 an accidental cavity
 shaped like a heart
 or a tear drop
 its bounty of burnt offerings
 overflowing
 the need to fix somewhere
 this hope
 this promise
 this presence multiplied-
 the signs
 a sacred language speaking
 to me now reaching
 me in silent *oraciones*
 whispered on the trail
 all those candles
 like the lotería cards
 marking the way.

What can I know of those who crossed?
 What can I tell you of their *oraciones*
 breathing life into that canyon
 in the Lake Arivaca drought?
 What place can I imagine for them?
 What home?
 What homecoming?

SILVIA R. TANDECIARZ (Argentina y E.E.U.U.), doctora en letras por Duke University, es especialista en estudios culturales argentinos. Enseña en el Departamento de Lenguas Modernas en el College of William and Mary en Virginia. Ha publicado numerosos ensayos y traducciones de crítica literaria, y su trabajo más reciente sobre la memoria pos-dictadura ha aparecido en Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos Social Justice y PMLA. Es co-traductora con Alice Nelson de *La insubordinación de los signos* y *Masculino/femenino* de Nelly Richard (Duke UP, 2004), y sus traducciones de la poesía de Juana Goergen han sido publicadas en la revista literaria bilingüe *Tameme*. Como poeta, su trabajo ha aparecido en las revistas *Diálogo*, *Letras femeninas* y *Carpetas de Poesía Luz*, en la antología *Poetic Voices Without Borders* (Gival Press, 2005) y en la exhibición de fotografía y poesía *Argentina: A Tale of Two Cities* (University of Delaware 2003). En 1988 recibió el premio Clarence Umy en poesía (Stanford University) y en 1999 ganó el premio Voces Selectas en poesía de Luz Bilingual Publishing.

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Photos by: Amanda Potter and Isabelle Cohen